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Biffkins—Very little. My wife's dressing for the ball.—Wayside Tales.

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You should have the Best and street and stre was set on a shelf outside the green-By ROBERT H. MOULTON HE scientists are upsetting many of our popular notions house and a single branch run through the glass into the warm interior. When spring came it was the interior branch nowadays. The latest theory that remained dormant, all the outthey have disproved has to side branches putting out leaves do with the effect of cold upon plant life in our northern promptly. Thus the two experiments served to check each other. states. While we have al-From a comparison of these two experiments it is evident that the difways believed that Jack Frost was the arch enemy of plant life, and that if it ference in behavior of the indoor and were not for him we would have flowers and fruits and grass perhaps all outdoor branches could not have been caused by any special action of the the year round, the scientists now tell

us that Jack, is in the main a beneficent old fellow. They admit that if he comes too early or stays too late, his visit is like-

ly to prove embarrassing. Yet if he did not come at all, which means if we did not have any cold weather, the majority of plants in our northern latitudes would show slow growth in the spring. It is hard to believe that the effect of cold is to stimulate rather than retard plant growth, but that is what we are now informed actually happens. Experts of the Department of Agriculture are responsible for this revolutionay theory. They back up the theory with the results of numerous experiments, however, and results are what count.

One fact stands clear in these experiments-the dormant condition of certain plants in winter is not the result of cold and freezing; moreover, cold stimulates the revival of life in the plant when spring comes. Such an explanation of the effect of cold is new to the everyday render, who is used to looking upon winter air as detrimental to plant life, forcing the shrub into a dormant state scarcely better than death. But healthy, husky blueberries which were in a govern-ment greenhouse "went to sleep" just the same, despite the fact that the air was kept at a growing temperature.

The shrubs, it is true, did not go to bed so early as they did .when Jack the warm greenhouse the plants went into a dormant condition exactly like that of others outside in the cold and anow. Moreover, they were late in waking when spring came. Some, in-deed, alept through the whole year. The inference is that the plant's period of dormancy is a seasonal matter not induced by the cold, but that the early and luxuriant growth cannot oc cur unless the plant has been through a period of chill temperature,

Two interesting experiments were conducted with blueberry plants as proof of this. In the middle of Feb ruary a blueberry plant which had hed its leaves and become dormant in a warm greenhouse maintained at a temperature of 70 degrees was repotted and set in the south end of the greenhouse. A small opening was made in the glass, and through this opening one of the two stems of the plant was thrust, the open space about the stem where it passed through the glass being carefully plugged. During the rest of the winter the plant remained in the same position, the pot and one stem continuing in the warm temperature of the greenhouse, while the other stem, projecting through the giass. Fas exposed to the rigors of wints, with its alternate freezing and thawing. About the middle of April And it is worth while to consider some the out-door branch started into nor- of these causes, for not only are they continued dormant.

A medification of this experiment here presented, they serve to strength-was conducted at the same time with on and confirm it.

The pruning of a long-dormant plant tail Ledger, Philadelphia.

root system, for in one experiment the roots were inside, and in the other, out. It is clear that the causes that stimulated growth in the exposed stems operated in the stem itself, not in the roots. The theory is that the cold weakens the plant cells, and by destruction in part turns the starch to sugar, thus assuring new growth. This event, it is asserted, cannot take place if the plants are protected from frost and cellular injury.

A little consideration will show how important the principle of chilling is to those species of trees and shrubs which are subjected each year to several months of freezing weather. If they are so constituted as to start into growth as easily in the warm days of late fall as they do in the warm days of early spring, many species would come into flowers and leaf in those warm autumn spells that we call Indian summer, and the stored food that the plant required for its normal vigorous growth in the following spring would be wasted in a burst of new autumn growth, which would be killed by the first her freezes and would be followed by a winter of weakness and probable

But when two or three months of chilling are necessary before a newly dormant plant will respond to the usual effect of warmth, such plants are protected against the dangers of the size of a pea to a fruit almost growth in Indian summer. It is probable that all out native trees and shrubs are thus protected.

Anyone may make a simple and instructive experiment in the fall and winter with such early spring bloomers as aider, hazelnut, pussy willow, yellow bush jasmine, forsythia, Japnnese quince, peach and plum. mid-entumn bring into your living room and set in water freshly cut, dormant, leafless branches of these plants. They will not bloom. At intervals of a few weeks during the late autumn and winter try the same experiment again. It will be found that the branches cut at later dates will come into bloom under this treatment. They will not do so, however, until the expiration of the period chilling appropriate to the various kinds of plants included in the experiment.

It nlight be argued that in the trop-ics there is no chilling weather, yet that trees and shrubs spring into growth after the dormant period of the dry season just as they do in temperate climes after the dormant period of winter. The critical scientific man will therefore ask, "Are there not other agencies than chilling which will start dormant twees and shrubs into growth even in our own latitude?" It must be said in reply that there are. And it is worth while to consider some mai growth, while the indoor branch of interest in themselves but also, in-continued dormant.

will often start it into growth. Girdling produces a similar result. Notching the stem does the same. Rubbing the stem also starts the plant into growth. In all these examples of the stimulation of growth by injury it is conceived that the enzym, or soluble ferment, which is found in all plants and which transforms starch into sugar, is brought into contact with the starch as a direct result of the breaking and straining of the cells, thus causing sugar to be formed and growth to begin. Tropical plants probably have various methods of coming out of their dormancy, and there is every reason to expect that some of them will be found to accomplish this act in the same way as our long dormant greenhouse, by the weakening of their cell membranes. This is in effect substantially identical with chilling.

As a single example of the practical application of the principle of chiliing, it may be stated that the scientists of the Department of Agriculture in efforts to domesticate the wild blueberry plant, have succeeded, through the medium of hybrids, in bringing these plants into highly productive bearing. They have made them fruit so luxuriously and abundantly that they brought returns to the growers at the rate of more than \$1,-000 an acre. In a word, they changed the blueberry from a small wild fruit have made its culture a profitable industry.

These things they would not have been able to do, however, unless they had first worked out the principle of chilling, an understanding of which was essential to their work of breed-

ing and propagation. Going still further, the scientists re-sponsible for these improved varieties of blueberries have made them yield, in greenhouses, ripe blueberries in February and March, the largest berries reaching a diameter of over three-quarters of an inch. At various times from midsummer to autumn the plants were placed in glass frames artificially chilled. After two or three menths' chilling they were taken into a greenhouse and at once began growing and flowering, while similar plants that had not been through the chilling period continued dormant in the same greenhouse. This is additional proof of the fact that a period of chilling is a general requirement of northern plants.

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